

Open letter to Secretary-General of the United Nations Appointment of the next Secretary-General of UNCTAD

15 January 2013

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

Later this year, you will be nominating to the General Assembly your choice of the next Secretary-General of UNCTAD. The personal attributes of the chief executive of an international organisation are key factors affecting its performance and credibility. Thus the selection is crucial and for that, UNCTAD is no exception, especially at this time of global economic uncertainty.

We very strongly urge that the next Secretary-General of UNCTAD, in addition to all the necessary experience, knowledge and management abilities, should have in particular the capacity and courage for independent thought. It is this characteristic that has been the distinguishing factor among the eminent persons who have held the post over nearly 50 years of UNCTAD's existence.

A demonstrated ability to provide strong and independent leadership to global analysis from a development perspective and to promote fresh thinking on trade and development issues is needed today more than ever. The world clamours for innovative economic thinking that charts a sustainable way out of the current crisis and that contributes to development and poverty reduction. We would regard the capacity to stimulate such thinking and to articulate the resulting policy approaches in the relevant forums as the single most important consideration when sifting among possible candidates in the requisite consultations with member States. The growing weight of developing countries in global matters requires an intellectually outstanding personality as the new leader of UNCTAD.

The undersigned comprise those from public life and academia who respect the work of UNCTAD in one area or another as well as former UN and UNCTAD staff members who remain committed to its ideals and values. We have an interest in the outcome of this matter, but no interest in a particular candidate. We all fervently believe in the value to the international community, particularly developing countries, of ensuring a strong and credible UNCTAD that serves to focus inter-governmental debates on how the workings of the global economy affect developing countries.

We are confident you will select that eminent person who best epitomizes the capacity and the courage for independent thought on trade and development.

List of signatories*

Abdalla Abbas	former Director, UN-HABITAT, Geneva Office
Eugene Adoboli	former Prime Minister, Togo
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Xavier Alphaize	Professeur Associé, Institut d'Etudes Politiques, Lyon, France
Dame Margaret Joan Anstee	former UN Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Angola
Jamshid Anvar	former Director, UNCTAD
Mohamed Ariff	Emeritus Professor, International Economics, MIER, Malaysia
Miguel Arnabal	former Chief, Budget and Projects Finance Section, UNCTAD
Gerry Arsenis	former Director, UNCTAD
Bilgé Ögün Bassani	Fellow at Harvard School of Public Health
Awni Behnam	President, International Ocean Institute, Malta
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Yves Berthelot	former Under-Secretary-General, ECE, United Nations
Michael Bonello	former Governor, Central Bank of Malta
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Stephen Browne	Director, Future of the UN Development System (FUNDS) Project, Geneva
Phillippe Brusick	President, CUTS International (Consumer Unity and Trust Society), Geneva
Victor Busuttill	Member, Board of Directors, Central Bank of Malta
Ariel Buira	former Executive Director, IMF and head of the G-24 Secretariat of developing countries
John Burley	former Director, UNCTAD
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Nitin Desai	former Under-Secretary-General, DESA, UN
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Bijan Eslanloo	former Chief, Technical Cooperation Section, UNCTAD
Mahin Faghfour	President, International Multimodal Transport Association
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Gerard A. Fischer	Deputy Head of Mission, EU Monitoring Mission, Georgia
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Heiner Flassbeck	former Director, UNCTAD
Carlos Fortin	Deputy Secretary-General UNCTAD, 1990-2005
Ricardo Ffrench-Davis Muñoz	Full Professor of Economics, University of Chile
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Peter Froehler	retired United Nations official
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Murray Gibbs	Senior Advisor to the Secretary-General, UNCTAD (retired 2004)
Norman Girvan	former Secretary General, Association of Caribbean States
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Charles Gore	Honorary Professor of Economics, University of Glasgow, Scotland
Branislav Gosovic	Author of the first book on UNCTAD (1971)
Ilene Grabel	Professor, Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, USA
Stephany Griffith-Jones	Professor, Financial Markets Director, IPD, Columbia University, New York
Khalil Hamdani	former Director, UNCTAD
Peter Hansen	Commissioner-General, United Nations Relief and Works Agency, 1996-2005
Sukehiro Hasegawa	former Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste
Philip Hein	Member and Rapporteur, UN Committee on Development Policy, 2007-2012
Gerry Helleiner	Professor Emeritus, Economics, University of Toronto
K.G. Antony Hill	former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the UN & Specialized Agencies (Europe) and GATT/WTO (1978-89, 1996-1999)
Enrique ter Horst	former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General in the Office of the Director General for International Economic Cooperation and Development
Coll Hunter	Economist
Enrique Iglesias	Former United Nations Under-Secretary-General, ECLAC
Rouben Indijikian	former O-i-C, Special Unit on Commodities, UNCTAD
Pierre Jacquet	President, Global Development Network, New Delhi Cairo Washington DC
Sir Richard Jolly	Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF, (1982-96)
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Jose Antonio Ocampo	former UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs
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Trân Van Thinh Paul	Ancien Ambassadeur Union Européenne, auprès de l'Office des Nations-Unies à Genève et auprès du GATT/OMC (1979-1994)
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Ralph Zacklin	Assistant-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, United Nations, 1998-2005
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*This letter in no way engages any responsibility on part of any of the organisations with which any of the signatories are currently affiliated.

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